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TAGS: [PREL](#) [ETRD](#) [ENRG](#) [SNAR](#) [EAID](#) [CU](#) [XL](#)  
SUBJECT: CONFERENCE ON THE CARIBBEAN - MOVING AHEAD ON  
DELIVERABLES

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SUMMARY  
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¶1. (SBU) This is the first in a series of periodic updates for posts describing progress on June initiatives and deliverables of the 2007 Conference on the Caribbean. It also requests posts to engage with host governments to encourage effective follow-through on the part of relevant host government agencies regarding these initiatives (see para 13). Coordination is underway in Washington on initiatives to advance economic growth, invest in people, and improve security as outlined in the joint statement of the President and CARICOM heads of government. The success of these initiatives requires posts' continued support in communicating our goals and next steps with CARICOM members and officials. End Summary.

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ECONOMIC GROWTH INITIATIVES  
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¶2. (SBU) Before the Conference, WHA and the U.S. Trade Development Agency (USTDA), in coordination with Customs and Border Protection (CBP), successfully developed an action plan for the U.S.-CARICOM Customs Partnership. USTDA is working with implementing partners (e.g., CBP) to further develop training programs and capacity building assistance to strengthen and modernize CARICOM members' customs procedures and policies. In coordination with State, USTDA plans to conduct a definitional mission in the region in the Fall of 2007, to further this joint Customs project.

¶3. (SBU) The USG remains engaged in finalizing an updated Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) with CARICOM. CARICOM first requested updating our existing 1991 TIFA at the Trade and Investment Council in October 2006. USTR suggested edits to this agreement and awaits CARICOM's response. USTR has also expressed interest in another TIC meeting, but wants a substantive agenda with CARICOM before setting a date. In June, USTR received official notification from the CARICOM Secretariat that ASYG Irwin LaRoque would be their new interlocutor on trade issues. Heretofore, the Director General of the Caribbean Regional Negotiating Machinery (currently Richard Bernal), had been the primary point of contact for such issues.

¶4. (SBU) State continues to work with the Government of Brazil, the InterAmerican Development Bank, and the OAS on a biofuels partnership program. The President announced Haiti, St. Kitts and Nevis, the Dominican Republic and El Salvador as target countries. USG and Brazilian officials traveled with a senior OAS delegation to St. Kitts, Aug. 28-29, to present the OAS' feasibility study to the government and seek support to advance biofuel cooperation there. In Haiti, the

Dominican Republic and El Salvador, USTDA has hired Winrock International as technical consultants who will travel to these three countries in September to begin feasibility work. Primary State POCs on this are Matt McManus (EEB/ESC), Brenda Haendler (EEB/ESC/IEC) and Faith Corneille (WHA/EPSC).

15. (U) At the June Conference on the Caribbean, the Secretary reiterated her interest in negotiating a Science

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and Technology Agreement with CARICOM by the end of calendar year 2008. WHA/CAR and OES are responsible for coordination with CARICOM.

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INVESTING IN PEOPLE  
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16. (SBU) WHA/CAR is working with WHA/PPC, PRM, and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to develop a returnee reintegration pilot program for CARICOM. We expect IOM to submit a grant proposal in early September, thereby allowing us to obligate funds before the end of the fiscal year. The current plan is to launch this project in Jamaica and then expand it to Guyana and the Bahamas; the CARICOM countries that receive the most deportees from the United States. The program will aim to help returning citizens reintegrate into their home countries and strengthen each target country's capacity to provide such services as referrals, information on relevant laws, temporary housing, health care, job/skills training, and microcredits.

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17. (SBU) USAID will expand the Caribbean Centers for Excellence in Teacher Training (C-CETT), starting in 2008. Plans for the expansion remain preliminary, but the project will either focus on reaching more teachers or on expanding operations beyond those countries currently benefiting from the program. USAID will implement this through the Jamaica mission. (Note: The C-CETT is based in Jamaica, and Kingston is the only USAID mission in the English-speaking Caribbean so involved in education, and has been since 2002. End Note)

18. (SBU) USAID will also fund the creation of a dedicated Caribbean ENTRA 21 program in partnership with the International Youth Foundation (IYF). IYF relies on both public and private partners to fund and implement this 21st century job-skills training program aimed at high-tech and labor-market-needs based employment. USAID will coordinate with IYF for 2008 implementation.

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SECURITY FOR ALL  
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19. (SBU) Working through the OAS/CICTE process, we provided CARICOM members with port, tourism, and infrastructure security training in advance of the 2007 Cricket World Cup. We will provide additional funding to CICTE to build upon the CWC assistance to: (1) enhance member states' capacities in access controls to port facilities, cargo security, customs and immigration performance and procedures, including police and guard procedures; (2) improve the ability of target countries' law enforcement personnel to detect fraudulent travel and identity documents, as well as enhance communication and institutional links between customs and border security agencies in order to promote cooperation and collaboration in the control and fight against document fraud; and (3) build the capacity of CARICOM states to improve and standardize security controls in airports to comply with ICAO standards. CICTE will work with governments directly in coordination with USOAS, and is already putting together a DHS/DOE assessment of energy systems security in Trinidad and Tobago.

¶10. (SBU) DHS remains fully committed to completing and perhaps expanding APIS. Originally developed for Cricket World Cup, APIS proved a mutually beneficial border security tool. APIS also enjoys senior support from the USG and CARICOM. DHS hopes to send an audit team to Bridgetown in September and is seeking a telcon with Bajan Attorney General Marshall regarding the still un-negotiated Operational Protocols.

¶11. (SBU) Officials from TSA proposed expanding the Federal Air Marshals program to CARICOM earlier in 2007. A successfully negotiated MOU with interested countries would allow TSA to provide training on developing a similar program in the region, in addition to interim U.S. FAMS on board intraregional flights. State will renew coordination with TSA to determine next steps.

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¶12. (SBU) State will support NOAA's expanded Caribbean disaster preparedness efforts, including development of a regional all-hazards warning system and consortium building on current information and best-practices sharing. NOAA awaits a response from CDERA (Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency) on this concept, but NOAA has met with the CARICOM ambassadors in Washington as a precursor to the Conference. (Implementation is expected to begin in 2008.)

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POST COORDINATION  
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¶13. (SBU) While closing the Conference on the Caribbean, Secretary Rice acknowledged CARICOM's commitment to partner

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with the United States on a wide array of mutually important areas. To follow through on the commitments made by the President and Secretary to Caribbean counterparts at that gathering, posts are requested to engage with their CARICOM and host nation interlocutors by reiterating our commitment to this process and encouraging prompt, effective follow-through from pertinent ministries/offices on the above-mentioned initiatives. WHA/CAR will spearhead overall coordination and commits to sending monthly updates to ensure proper coordination with posts.

RICE